



**Minister for Environment; Disability Services
Deputy Leader of the Legislative Council**

Our Ref: 62-02245

Mr Vince Puccio
Chairman
Community Alliance for Positive Solutions
caps6218@yahoo.com

Dear Mr Puccio

I would like to acknowledge receipt of a range of information you have sent me, since I took up the Environment portfolio in March 2017, on behalf of the Community Alliance for Positive Solutions (CAPS), regarding the Alcoa Wagerup Refinery.

Where the matters raised have not been part of my portfolio responsibilities I have redirected your queries to the relevant Ministers for their response. In instances where you have copied me in on correspondence to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, I understand that the Department has responded to you directly.

I understand that you have written to successive State Governments, and the former Department of Environment Regulation and the Office of the Environmental Protection Authority for a number of years regarding Alcoa's Wagerup Operations and the Yarloop township.

I am aware of the longstanding community concerns regarding the Alcoa Wagerup Refinery, and I have asked the recently established Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) to provide me with regular updates on the status of operations at the refinery. In this respect I recommend you continue to engage directly with DWER during consultation processes established under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

In reference to your email dated 24 June 2017, I note the material provided, and I agree that large resources operations are significant contributors to Australia's greenhouse emissions. However, I also note that there are no aluminium smelters in Western Australia (the industry here being limited to bauxite mining and alumina refining), and the need to address the State's greenhouse emissions is a general matter that is not confined to the alumina industry.

In relation to your email of 3 July 2017 and the Wattleup Road Subdivision court proceedings you refer to, I understand that the State Administrative Tribunal (SAT) concluded that there was insufficient information provided by the applicant to support approval of that subdivision. I also understand that SAT made no findings in relation to dust and health impacts and that no inference from these proceedings can be drawn to Alcoa's Wagerup operations.

The Government supports the rebuilding of the township of Yarloop following devastating bushfires in January 2016 and is committed to working with the local community, as well as Alcoa, to ensure that operations at the Wagerup Alumina Refinery are managed in a sustainable manner and that impacts on the environment and the surrounding community are minimised.

Thank you for bringing these matters to my attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Dawson', written in a cursive style.

Hon Stephen Dawson MLC
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

16 AUG 2017